

Please retain media diversity Docket No. 02-277

Please do not loosen the current media ownership rules.

My husband and I are proud American patriots, extremely concerned about the way the current press is failing our democracy by limiting opinion and free speech. We believe that we are not getting sufficient diversity of information and opinion under the current trend towards a few large media conglomerates. (If, in fact, the polls that indicate that 70 per cent of Americans believe that Saddam Huessein was implicated in the 9/11 attacks, it indicates that the media is not currently doing its job of finding and presenting information, no matter what political views you endorse.)

Further consolidation would, we believe, only intensify the difficulty of finding information...

There should be more public hearings that are sponsored around the country by the FCC, with real advance notice and access so there can be citizen information and input on the local level. Frankly, most of us just can't get to Richmond, especially if we couldn't even be guaranteed a time to speak our concerns.

We are also especially concerned about the effect this will have on the Internet and its use for information gathering and dissemination, and its regulation as regards advertising (ie, the intrusive skyrocketing problem of SPAM).

The studies commissioned by the FCC don't seem to reflect the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. The upshot of deregulation would be a serious compromise in one of our most important freedoms: the right to practice and hear free speech and difference of opinion. This should be serving the public, NOT primarily those investing millions of dollars in their own, and their advertisers, points of view.

We urge you most strongly to open up the process, to delay the rush to such drastic change, and to act to open up the democratic foundation of the free exchange of information, not just auction it to the highest bidders.

Sincerely,

Margaret A. Redmond & Steven J. Ring